

H.B. No. 6824: An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017, And Making Appropriations Therefor And Other Provisions Related To Revenue.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

Ernestine Y. Weaver
President

Michael Carrier
Vice President

Hugh Penney
Secretary

Harry Sitilides
Treasurer

Directors at Large

Mary Jean Agostini

Charles Boos

Roderick Brown

Joseph Harper

Richard Judd

Justine Moriarty

Jean Plocharczyk

Paul Salina

Steve Westall

Chief Executive Officer

Anne L. Ruwet

Submitted By: Ernestine Yuille Weaver, CCARC, Inc. Board of Directors, 1st Vice President
CCARC Foundation, Inc., Board of Directors, President

March 7, 2015

Senator Bye, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Ernestine Weaver, I am First Vice President of the CCARC, Inc. Board of Directors and President of the CCARC Foundation, Inc. CCARC has been providing essential services, such as residential, day and other support services for people with developmental and other disabilities since 1952 throughout central Connecticut. We are among the 500+ member agencies of the Connecticut Association of Nonprofits (CT Nonprofits.)

I would like to share my concerns with H.B. 6824, An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017, And Making Appropriations Therefor And Other Provisions Related To Revenue. In particular, I wanted to express my sincere concerns to the funding reductions to the Department of Developmental Services. This funding reduction would threaten critical services to individuals and families in our service area.

My history with CCARC extends for almost 20 years. I was an employee for the first 11 years and due to the excellent and necessary work performed by this and similar organizations, have been a volunteer for the past 8 years. As I recall, each and every year the CT Nonprofits struggle to attain funding to keep pace with the cost of living. Despite the efforts and the desperate and ever increasing need for their services, they are almost never funded to appropriate levels. The staff of CCARC have not experienced an increase in five years despite the continuing demands to keep people safe. This latest budget is particularly draconian and I question whether the safety net of nonprofits, that has been stretched so thin over the past many years, will be able to adequately provide services to protect the most vulnerable of our community.

The proposed cuts, coupled with four rounds of rescissions/budget modification dating back to late 2012, have put enormous pressure onto an already severely depleted system. The reality is that nonprofit providers have been pushed to our breaking point due to the lack of investment over the past two decades. Chronic underfunding has already forced many nonprofits to close, compete against one another for scarce resources, layoff employees, reduce benefit packages; altogether creating a win or lose system that weakens the entire nonprofit sector and threatens its sustainability.

As members of the Appropriations Committee work toward creating your 'Recommended Budget' for SFY16 and 17, I urge you to restore these harmful cuts to ensure critical programs and services are available to the residents of Connecticut. I'd also like to respectfully remind you that investing in the nonprofit sector will improve service delivery, increase economic activity, and save taxpayer money; a "win-win" for policymakers working to strengthen the economy, the nonprofit workforce trying to make ends meet, and most importantly, the clients and their families who count-on efficient, cost-effective, and high-quality services in our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, or for additional information.

Ernestine Yuille Weaver
40 Olde Roberts Street
East Hartford, CT 06108
eyweaver@sbcglobal.net